

MAR 13 2015

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## SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

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REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS TO DEVELOP A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE PROTECTION OF TARO BY IMPLEMENTING THE PROPOSALS SET FORTH IN ACT 211, SESSION LAWS OF HAWAII 2008, AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS OUTLINED IN THE TARO SECURITY AND PURITY TASK FORCE'S 2010 REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE.

1 WHEREAS, from the sacred union of Papa and Wākea came  
2 Hāloanakalaukapalili, the kalo, the progenitor and elder brother  
3 to Hawaiians, and Hāloa, the first man, who together represent  
4 the ties binding heaven and earth; and

5  
6 WHEREAS, kalo was the initial source of substantial  
7 nutrition for the early Hawaiians without which the early people  
8 of Hawaii could not have thrived and possibly not have survived  
9 as a population in Ka Pae 'Āina; and

10  
11 WHEREAS, the kinship story of Hāloa and  
12 Hāloanakalaukapalili binds the descendants of Hāloa in a  
13 reciprocal relationship of kuleana of malama 'āina; and

14  
15 WHEREAS, no other Hawaiian staple crop, including 'uala,  
16 mai'a or 'ulu, is considered as sacred as kalo to the people of  
17 Hawaii; and

18  
19 WHEREAS, kalo supported and elevated everyday inter-  
20 personal relationships among the early people and their  
21 spiritual connections to the islands; and

22  
23 WHEREAS, kalo is further esteemed as a primary food source  
24 that continues to provide substantial nutritional value; and

25  
26 WHEREAS, protection of the individual as well as Hawaiian  
27 culture, history, and spirituality are reflected in the  
28 protection of kalo and the areas in which kalo is grown; and  
29



1 WHEREAS, the reciprocal relationship between kalo farms and  
2 the communities across the Hawaiian islands continues to improve  
3 social and familial bonds, intellectual achievements, cultural  
4 connections, and emotional and physical health of island-based  
5 residents; and

6  
7 WHEREAS, by the arrival of the first Europeans in 1778,  
8 Hawaiians had developed one of the most advanced systems of wet  
9 and dry kalo cultivation in the Pacific, feeding a population of  
10 more than three hundred thousand; and

11  
12 WHEREAS, the number of acres under wetland kalo production  
13 islandwide has fallen dramatically from some thirty thousand  
14 acres in 1850 to approximately five hundred acres today; and

15  
16 WHEREAS, kalo became the state plant in 2008 in honor of  
17 the cultural, historic, and agricultural significance of kalo to  
18 Hawai'i and its people; and

19  
20 WHEREAS, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force was  
21 created by Act 211, Session Laws of Hawaii 2008, to guide policy  
22 and research kalo and kalo farming as well as to support the  
23 vitality, economic viability, and perpetuation of kalo and kalo  
24 farming in Hawaii; and

25  
26 WHEREAS, the Governor's 2010 comprehensive plan "A New Day  
27 in Hawaii" called for an "agricultural renaissance" to improve  
28 food security, boost local jobs and revenue, and decrease  
29 dependence on importation; and

30  
31 WHEREAS, Hawaii imports approximately two million pounds of  
32 kalo annually from China, Mexico, and other Pacific islands; and

33  
34 WHEREAS, Hawaii is subject to frequent and chronic  
35 shortages of kalo, lu'au leaf, and poi, particularly following  
36 natural disasters, due to insufficient commercial supply and  
37 insufficient kalo production; and

38  
39 WHEREAS, the importation of kalo presents a high risk of  
40 invasive pest introduction and diseases capable of threatening  
41 kalo cultivation and reduces opportunities for numerous young



1 kalo growers to drive local kalo production and naturally reduce  
2 state dependency on kalo importation; and

3  
4 WHEREAS, in 2013, the Department of Agriculture identified  
5 the lack of locally grown, staple starch crops as the most  
6 pressing concern for Hawaii's food security; and

7  
8 WHEREAS, kalo, as one of the highest yielding starch crops  
9 per acre in Hawaii, is a key factor in addressing this need for  
10 local staple starch production, along with other Hawaiian food  
11 crops; and

12  
13 WHEREAS, even the lowest sea level rise estimates indicate  
14 the likelihood of inundation of unsuitable, brackish water in  
15 lowland areas that produce the bulk of locally grown kalo,  
16 including Hanalei, Kauai; Keanae-Wailuanui, Maui; Hālawā,  
17 Molokai; and Waipio, Hawai'i Island; and

18  
19 WHEREAS, the production and consumption of kalo and poi  
20 significantly factor into a healthy Hawaiian diet and overall  
21 healthy lifestyle of the state population; and

22  
23 WHEREAS, community-wide practices involving healthy diets  
24 and lifestyles lead to the reduction of diabetes and heart  
25 disease within the State, which in turn leads to reduced demands  
26 on the state healthcare system; and

27  
28 WHEREAS, despite the many benefits of kalo and its  
29 significance in Hawaii, the amount of kalo produced and kalo-  
30 growing lands available in each ahupua'a continue to limit  
31 capacity for change due to existing shortages; and

32  
33 WHEREAS, perpetuating and expanding kalo production in  
34 Hawaii contribute to resilient communities and an overall policy  
35 of "pono economics"; and

36  
37 WHEREAS, the "pono economics" policy seeks to:

- 38  
39 (1) Implement economic initiatives reflecting and  
40 reinforcing traditional Hawaiian values;  
41



(2) Repair ecological balance to achieve social balance;  
and

(3) Protect the rights and interests of future  
generations; and

WHEREAS, the voices of a younger generation that desire to  
grow kalo are increasing every year, and it is the kuleana of  
this body to protect the foundation of, and lay the groundwork  
for, their success; and

WHEREAS, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force's 2010 and  
2014 reports to the Legislature outlined eighty-seven strategic  
recommendations organized in seven broad categories, noted key  
policy issues, and identified partner organizations and state  
agencies capable of implementing the recommended initiatives;  
and

WHEREAS, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force has helped  
strengthen relationships among kalo farmers, researchers, and  
state agencies, especially around issues of water and land,  
educational outreach, pest control, and the preservation of  
Hawaiian cultivars; and

WHEREAS, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force has  
supported, through policy and education, the growth of  
subsistence and small-scale kalo farmers as an under-represented  
but valuable segment of the agricultural industry; and

WHEREAS, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force dissolves  
on June 30, 2015; and

WHEREAS, an online petition recently initiated by the  
public has collected more than one thousand seven hundred  
signatures supporting the continuance of a transparent entity  
that would facilitate and implement the Taro Security and Purity  
Task Force's recommendations, further highlighting the urgency  
and value of perpetuating kalo for the greater community; and

WHEREAS, the one thousand seven hundred signatories  
supporting the continuance of a transparent entity to follow the  
Taro Security and Purity Task Force highlights the urgency of



1 increased protective measures and the value of perpetuating kalo  
2 cultivation and consumption for the greater community; now,  
3 therefore,  
4

5 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth  
6 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2015, the  
7 House of Representatives concurring, that the Office of Hawaiian  
8 Affairs is requested to develop a strategic plan for the  
9 protection of taro by implementing the proposals set forth in  
10 Act 211, Session Laws of Hawaii 2008, and recommendations  
11 outlined in the Taro Security and Purity Task Force's 2010  
12 report to the Legislature; and  
13

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the strategic plan be aimed at  
15 creating a permanent state body that will continue to represent  
16 taro farmer concerns at the Legislature and with agencies,  
17 facilitate the work outlined in Act 211 and the 2010 report to  
18 the Legislature, and provide a point of contact for researchers  
19 and agencies interested in working with taro farmers; and  
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21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Office of Hawaiian Affairs  
22 is requested to report its strategic plan to the Legislature no  
23 later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular  
24 Session of 2017; and  
25

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
27 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, President  
28 of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives,  
29 Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian  
30 Affairs, and Taro Security and Purity Task Force.  
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OFFERED BY:

  
  
  
  
  


